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ABSTRACT

A study investigated whether whole language principles had "seeped" into secondary language arts teaching in Cass County, Michigan by surveying teachers' attitudes. A total of 14 of the 15 language arts teachers in the four secondary schools in the county returned completed surveys. Results indicated that the language arts teachers (1) had approximately 20 years teaching experience; (2) had both undergraduate and graduate degrees; (3) had one or more hours of training in whole language and "somewhat" understood the concept of whole language instruction; (4) use the traditional approach to instruction, but use other whole language strategies as well; and (5) prefer a combination of traditional and whole language approaches in the classroom. Findings suggest that most teachers seemed willing to try new strategies but were unwilling to discard "tried and true" methods. (The survey instrument, cover letter, a table of data, and 17 figures of data are attached. Contains 18 references.) (RS)

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WHOLE LANGUAGE: A SURVEY OF LANGUAGE ARTS APPROACHES IN CASS COUNTY MICHIGAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Ada M. Barr

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Outline

I. Introduction

A. Why I chose Whole Language for my exit project

B. Definitions:

1 Whole Language

2.Traditional Language

3. Literacy

II. Classroom use (Is anyone doing it?)

A Elementary schools-Krillenberger exit project

B. Secondary schools--interviews

III. Hypothesis

A. Whole Language is relevant to secondary education--especially in the approach to teaching language arts.

B. Many high school teachers are presently using many whole language strategies in their classrooms.

IV. Methods

A Survey of the secondary language arts teachers in the four high schools in Cass County, Michigan: Cassopolis Ross Beatty High School, Dowagiac Union High School, Edwardsburg High School, and Marcellus High School.

B. Permission secured from the individual principals and the building English department heads.

C. A survey comprised of various strategies of both whole language and traditional language.
Survey also asked for professional data and philosophy on language.

D. Procedure: 15 surveys were mailed out, 14 were returned. the surveys were done anonomously in a county-wide manner, not school by school.V

V. Results

A. involved the frequency of Whole Language strategies used in the classroom, as well as the frequency of more traditional strategies.

B Most teachers favored a combination of whole language and traditional language approaches in the teaching of language arts

C Predictably, those teachers who had received their degrees in the 80's or 90's were more enthusiastic about whole language. These were, however, definitely in the minority as most of the teachers in the survey had taught many years, having received their degrees before or during the 1970's.

VI. Discussion

A Overall conclusions- Most of the teachers seemed willing to try new strategies, but were unwilling to discard old "tried and true" methods. However, most of the teachers in the survey said they "somewhat" understood the principles of whole language.

B The Limitations of my survey was that it was a small sample, but still, included all of the schools in Cass County, Michigan. Another limitation was the unfamiliarity of the teachers with some of the terms/strategies in the survey.

C Suggestions: Communication is the key to any effective restructuring of curriculum. It must include the community, as well as the professional and para-professionals in a school system. Whole Language is a philosophy that seeks to educate the whole child. It teaches language as a process, not as a set of skills to be learned. It is holistic in that listening, reading, writing, and speaking are integrated and skills are embedded in the learning process The teacher becomes the facilitator, who models the process and is immersed in it along with his/her students. It is, I believe, the process that will produce the readers and writers, listeners and speakers of the future

HYPOTHESIS: Whole language is relevant to secondary education especially in the approach to teaching language arts. Many high school teachers are presently using many whole language strategies in their classrooms.

PURPOSE: To discover what whole language really is, how it relates to literacy and to design a survey to be sent to all language arts teachers in the secondary schools in Cass County, Michigan, to ascertain the frequency of whole language strategies used in their classrooms.

DEFINITIONS: Whole language is an approach to language that focuses on the "whole" child by emphasizing the four language arts: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. It views the child and language holistically. It goes from the whole to the part.

Traditional language approach is based on the scope and sequence of skills, and goes from the parts to the whole.

PROCEDURE: To research whole language for an understanding of this approach to teaching language aarts. To contact the four high school principals in Cass County, Michigan, to secure permission to do the survey in their high school. I contacted the department heads to explain the survey. The letters were sent on October 20, 1993, and the surveys were returned by November 1, 1993. Of 15 surveys sent, 14 were returned.

WHOLE LANGUAGE: A SURVEY OF LANGUAGE ARTS APPROACHES IN CASS COUNTY MICHIGAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Introduction

In my heart I have always been a whole language teacher and advocate I applaud its emphasis on the whole child. It goes back to my childhood when I sat with brothers, nieces and nephews of various ages and listened to my mother read books to us such as *The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come* and *Ivanhoe* I loved the sound of her voice, we were always free to ask questions or to discuss passages. I remember the making-up-rhymes game on rainy days and my father reading me the Sunday comics as he explained and discussed the pictures with me. There was no television when I was a small child and the four components of whole language--listening, reading, writing, and speaking were an integral and joyful part of my life. My personal experience echoed Richard Vaca's assertion, "Children are in the process of becoming literate from birth. They are as predisposed to learn to read and write naturally as they are to learn to speak, because they are immersed in oral and written language". (Vaca and Rasinski, 1992. p. 25) What is whole language? Is it practiced only in elementary and middle school classrooms, and how often is it practiced? Does it have any relevance for secondary teaching of

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English? Is it being practiced in secondary schools? Finding the answers to these questions is the purpose of my research.

I have taught English and theatre for twenty-four years. I have used traditional methods--grammar drills, sentence structure, paragraphing, reading, and answering the questions. I have evolved into team-teaching, cooperative learning, mastery learning, and student discovery techniques. I felt, from what I had heard about whole language that I used many whole language strategies in my classroom I also knew that I used traditional approaches as well, such as anthology-based literature in my English literature classes Were other teachers in my school and in other high schools in my county doing the same thing? When I talked to other high school teachers, they seemed to feel that whole language was strictly "an elementary thing--which was opposed to teaching phonics!"

In this paper, I first define whole language and discuss its applicability to secondary classrooms. I will include information gained in interviews. Next, I will include the results of a survey I conducted Finally, I will discuss my findings and make some recommendations

Whole Language Approach

Whole language is not just a set of strategies, as Constance Weaver, a professor of language at Western Michigan University, says, "Whole language is a philosophy, a belief system about the nature of learning and how it can be fostered in classrooms and school--it is an evolving philosophy. (Weaver, 1990, p. 3)

Barbara Flores says that "whole language theory contends that students are best served by an education that accounts for at least three ideas: (1) that the context for learning should take advantage of people's propensity to do/think//know more when they are a part of learning communities; (2) that planning for learning and teaching has to account for the social relationships in which the learning and teaching will be embedded; and (3) that what is learned should have some sensible and imminent connection to what it is learned for (purpose) (Edelsky, 1991, p.24)

In *Making Sense of Whole Language,* John W. Myers defines whole language. He defines it as:

1. It is "whole language" because it focuses on the "whole" child, by emphasizing the four language arts: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. It views the child and language holistically.

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2. Whole language moves from whole to the part, rather than from the part to the whole.
3. It is called 'whole' because it is the 'natural' way to learn language. (p. 10)

Whole language prefers learner-focused curricula and holds to a conception of the classroom as a community and of teachers who learn and learners who teach based on recent research and theory-building in linguistics, sociolinguistics, and cognitive psychology. In whole language, process, product and content are interrelated. It operates on the basis that all systems are always present and interdependent. Flash cards, for instance, taught in isolation strips away meanings for the learner. Language is predictable. There are clues, and prediction is important and part of the process of reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Goodman, Goodman, and Hood, 1989).

Traditional Approach

The traditional approach to language emphasizes skills in sequential order. Students' progress is charted in the mastery of these particular skills. Very often, vocabulary, spelling, reading, speaking, listening are taught as separate skills although some may interconnect at times. Anthology-based literature is a traditional approach in that most, if not all, of the literature

taught is from an anthology as opposed to the whole language approach which would use trade books or novels, for example.

Discussion

Weaver says, "Whole language supports this active concept of learning--which is sometimes called transactional--reflecting the fact that the learner actively engages with or transacts with the external environment" (Weaver, 1990, p. 7)

So, in my quest for understanding whole language, not only as a philosophy but as a working strategy, I needed to understand how whole language defines literacy. Does whole language create literate students? Literacy defined in whole language classrooms might be characterized as this--Literacy is:

1. seeing yourself as a reader and writer.
2. enjoying reading and writing; through independent reading and writing, and through working and sharing with others.
3. gaining insight into yourself and others through books
4. gaining information from various kinds of environmental print as well as from books, magazines, and newspapers.

5 taking responsibility and risks.

6. developing a flexible repertoire of strategies for constructing meaning, monitoring your own comprehension, and solving problems encountered in trying to construct meaning.

7. writing for various purposes and audiences.

8. developing a repertoire of increasingly sophisticated and flexible strategies for generating ideas, drafting, revising, editing, and "publishing" what you write.

9 developing an appreciation for different kinds of literature as well as using the various conventions of various literary genres in your writing.

10. learning strategies for reading accepted conventions for writing in the context of authentic literary events; because you have an immediate need for the strategies and skills.

11. using written language to think and create.

(Myers, 1993, *Fastback*, 346)

It did not surprise me that some elementary teachers have adopted whole language teaching in their classrooms. I find many elementary administrators and teachers more apt to change. I

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believe that high schools are the last bastion of traditionalism. (hence the discovery that out of 284 selections in ERIC on whole language, only 14 concerned secondary education) If children learn language through whole language strategies in the elementary and possibly the middle school, what happens to them when they get to the high school and traditional language (drills, read the chapter, answer the question, and teacher as lecturer) is the norm?

Can and should whole language be taught exclusively at the elementary level, or any level? Does not the philosophy of whole language emcompass K-12 curriculum? Implementing whole language may be very difficult indeed, not only for a particular level but for a school-wide curriculum. It has been both surprising and frustrating to find that whole language has become an issue--politically as well as educationally. I agree with Vacca and Rosinski who state that "...some critics have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo. P. David Pearson (1989), an influential literacy educator, also one of the senior authors of a leading basal reading program...expresses concern for what he considers the political naivete of the movement and wonders what its legacy will be 20 years from now .

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Walter MacGinitie (1991), echoes Pearson's concerns. He is the major author of a widely used standardized reading test. He warns that whole language will fail if carried to the extreme. He says that whole language advocates should heed the mistakes of other educational movements such as the Open Classroom. He further states that 'whole language is, in the best sense of the expression, an anti-establishment movement that has called into question the way children and youth are taught to read and write in our nation's schools". (p.21-22)

I know that whole language is controversial because in my own school system we are presently restructuring our K-12 language arts curriculum. Our elementary teachers are aghast at possibly giving up their basals and adopting whole language, the high school staff, with a couple exceptions, do not know enough about whole language and basals to take a stand .

As Vaca and Rosinski state, "The pervasive use of basal programs in schools has been described by Harsle (1989) as the "basalization of American reading instruction. A basal reader mentality, according to Harste, affects the way teachers and children think about reading comprehension. In basals, comprehension is thought of and taught as a set of skills rather than as something (a language process) readers actually do to make

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sense of text (p 245)

Ken Goodman (1986) said, "Many school traditions seem to have actually hindered language development. In our zeal to make it easy, we've made it hard. How? Primarily, by breaking whole (natural) language into bite-sized, but abstract little pieces.

In my June, 1994 issue of *The Council Chronicle,* a newspaper published by The National Council of Teachers of English, Vol. 3 No. 5, a headline reads "Belaguered Principal Faces More Charges, Delayed Hearings--Troubles Started with Whole Language Curriculum", by Anna Flanagan. The article states that Joanne Falinski, principal of Furnace Woods Elementary School, in the Hendrick Hudson School District in Peekskill, New York, has been suspended since September of last year of her duties as principal.

In the mid-eighties, Falinski and some of her teaching staff attended a whole language workshop led by author and international language consultant Andrea Butler. They became excited by its potential for their classrooms and looked forward to returning and building a new holistic program together.

However, not all the teachers at Furnace Woods embraced the new philosophy. Some were alienated by changes which included the elimination of departmentalized teaching in the fourth and fifth grades.

This involved moving more traditional teachers to other schools, and much resentment resulted. A "Concerned Parents" group organized--a small, but vocal group that toppled the program and brought Falinski up on charges.

"Under the whole language curriculum, children began to write and read more, to generate spelling lists from their own work, to correct each other's work. Rather than report cards, teachers sent letters home to parents that detailed their children's activities and accomplishments and emphasized those areas in which the children needed more attention.", Falinski stated.

Frank Madden of the NCTE Executive Committee, who had been invited to observe the progress at Furnace Woods, said, "It was a real, genuine, caring kind of assessment that was going on here....The disgruntled parents believed that what was going on was that 'fundamental skills of mathematics, spelling, sentence structure, hand-writing, and reading comprehension are severely lacking in our children's education."

"They wanted a lot of 'drill and practice'", Falinski said. "They equated that kind of activity with learning. They didn't understand how those skills were embedded in the more holistic activities in which the children were engaged."

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Falinski and Janet Malang, school board member, said they should have done a better job of educating the parents, the middle school, and high school before implementing whole language. (p.6,7)

Interestingly, I have found that the very words "whole language" are inflammatory and "integrated studies", which is actually not always the same thing, is much more palatable and less threatening.

Despite the controversy, a recent issue of *Update*, published by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, stated, "The whole language movement is definitely growing, says Marie Carbo, executive director of the National Reading Styles Institute, whose travels around the country bring her into contact with about 5,000 teachers a year. Teachers are highly interested in whole language," she says, "although only a minority are using the approach extensively." The majority are just starting to dabble, by putting more emphasis on literature or allowing students more choice Most teachers, 90 - 95% are still using basal readers.

Dorothy Strickland, a professor of reading at Rutgers University, who also travels widely said, "I haven't found any place where the ideas aren't beginning to seep in". Educators may call the approach something different, she notes, such as "integrated

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language arts" or "language arts across the curriculum".(Vacca,1992, p.134)

Interviews

Eager to actually see whole language in action, I called Constance Weaver for an interview. Instead, she recommended that I observe and interview Dr. Janet Vanek of Western Michigan University about the project she is heading at Loy Norrix High School. So, on April 8, 1994 , I traveled to Loy Norrix High School in Kalamazoo, Michigan, where a program of "integrated studies" is being implemented with a grant from the Eli Lily Company in conjunction with student-teacher assistance from Western Michigan University. This program is a joint cooperative effort between the University and Loy Norrix High School.

In my interview with Dr. Vanek, I learned that the intent was to first adopt the philosophy of whole language and then to infuse it across the entire curriculum. Much planning involving administrators, school board members, parents, students, teachers, and staff at WMU was evident. At WMU, students enrolled in education classes may opt for a "cluster program" involving three classes which include planning with teachers, assisting in the classroom and attending seminars on the program. I had the opportunity to talk to a couple of the college students. They were

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very enthusiastic about the program because it got them into the classroom, they had an "inside view" on what planning needs to be implemented in order to launch a program such as this, and they got the opportunity to actually practice some of the new methodology that they had been studying earlier. I talked to a science teacher who was also enthused about the program. He told me of a geography class and a mathematics class that collaborated integrating the two disciplines with whole language emphasis (i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing).

Whole language--special needs

It is also apparent that whole language is also effectively used in special education classes as well as in classes where inclusion of special needs children is practiced. A study compiled by Phyliss Brazie and Susan Haynes, centered on IEP's for special education students in regards to WRAT (wide-range achievement test). On this test, the children were to read: recognizing and naming letters and pronouncing words out of context. In spelling, they were to copy marks resembling letters, writing the name, and writing single words to dictation. They stated that the WRAT was intentionally designed to eliminate, as totally as possible, the effects of comprehension" And, we wonder why students hate to read!

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One key defense against the Reading Subtest of the WRAT-R is Ken Goodman's study (1965) in which he examined the oral reading of first, second, and third graders as they read words in isolation in lists and those same words embedded in stories. The results indicated that children at all levels read considerably more words in context than in isolation. His final conclusion was: the children in this study found it harder to recognize words than to read them in stories. Eventually, I believe we must abandon our concentration on words in teaching (and testing) reading and develop a theory of reading and a methodology which puts the focus where it belongs: on language (Goodman, Goodman, Hood, 1989, p. 251),

They also found that special education master's degrees often include only one course in reading and no courses in writing. Most have not had an opportunity to learn about whole language. This is certainly a deprivation for a child with special needs who could learn to read and comprehend much more readily with whole language.

In Michigan, students are given the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) tests in fourth, seventh and tenth grades. The tests prove what teachers know--most students are not reluctant readers--they are <u>resistant</u> readers. They hate to

read The tests have shown that 1 to 2% of the students read recreationally (Weaver, 1990, p. 27). Apparently what Weaver terms the transmissional mode of instruction--where the teacher transmits the information (or the traditional method is used), does not generate readers However, the transactional method, or whole language does generate readers.

Then, is whole language relevant to secondary education? Myers states, "Certainly if whole language offers a perspective on language learning, then it would be equally appropriate for all grade levels." (Myers, 1993, *Fastback*)

Hypothesis

As a result of my literary review and interviews, I decided to survey the language arts teachers in the secondary schools in my county, Cass County, Michigan, to see how much they were using whole language I theorized that whole language had indeed "seeped" in to secondary language arts instruction.

However, I was also certain that traditional language arts teaching was the norm. I was also interested in the attitudes of the teachers in regards to whole language. Strategies listed in the survey were the following sixteen items. I also provided room for comments (See Appendix for complete survey). I was very interested in Linda Krillenberger's exit project on Whole Language

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vs Traditional Language in the South Bend Elementary Schools. I believe it shows how pervasive whole Language is, and that it is a subject worth exploring. I am also indebted to Linda for ideas from the format of her survey in constructing my own survey. The survey asked teachers to respond to the following strategies (both Whole Language and Traditional):

teacher reads aloud

sustained silent reading

book sharing

student selection of reading

students chose their response
to literature

reader response logs

dialogue journals

journal writing

anthology-based literature

writing folders/process writing

oral and visual activities included with literature

grammar and composition skills
taught separately from literature

study sheets or skill sheets used

skill lessons taught according to scope and sequence

reading strategies taught (REAP, EVOKE, etc.)

cooperative learning group

The items were associated with either whole language or traditional language arts approaches. Teachers were asked to circle a number to indicate the frequency of that strategy in their classroom.

The survey also contained questions pertaining to their educational backgrounds and philosophy of language approach. On this section, teachers checked a category to indicate their answer. There was also a section for comments.

The survey was sent to the four secondary schools in Cass County, Michigan: Cassopolis Ross Beatty High School, Dowagiac Union High School, Edwardsburg High School, and Marcellus High School. A total of 15 surveys (the total number of language arts teachers) were sent out October 21, and 14 were returned by November 1, 1994

In order to get a picture of the county's secondary language arts teachers, I also asked them to answer the following questions:

1. When did you graduate from college?
2. What was the philosophy of your English-methods classes?
3. How many years of teaching experience do you have?

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4 How many hours of whole language training have you experienced?

5 How familiar are you with the whole language concept?

6. How would you describe the Language arts instruction in your classroom?

7. If given a choice and resources what language arts approach would you prefer to use in your classroom? and

8. what grade level/s do you teach?

All surveys were anonymously returned and the results are designed to show a county-wide result, not a school by school result. Before sending out the surveys I contacted each high school principal and English Department Head, to secure permission to send the surveys to their schools. I telephoned each school to set up an appointment, but they preferred to give me this permission over the telephone

On the survey, most of the strategies listed could be considered whole language activities; only four are more traditional. Those are "grammar and composition taught separately", "study/skills worksheets used for instruction", "skills are taught according to scope and sequence", and "anthology-based literature". In compiling a list of strategies, I used strategies most often discussed in my research sources. Of course, how the whole

language strategies were rated also could denote a more traditional approach to language.

On a scale of 1 to 5, teachers were asked to rate each strategy 5 Daily, 4 Often, 3 Weekly, 2 Rarely, and 1 Never. I will show the responses by using an average or mean of the 1-5 scale. I decided to do this because of the relative smallness of my sample.

Results

In this section, I will describe responses question by question. The average response from my sample for "Teacher reads aloud " was weekly, or 3.8 (see figure 1). I realize that a teacher who taught traditionally could also read aloud to his/her class. However, by reading aloud, I meant modeling reading, by reading, stopping, discussing, and predicting. This could also be just reading instructions. "Sustained Silent Reading" was done on the average, weekly, also with a 3.64 (figure 2) average. "Book Sharing" was rarely done, 2.38 (figure 3). "Student Selection of Reading" was also rarely done 2.29 (figure 4) "Student Choses their response to literature" was done weekly 3.38 (figure 5) on the average, and "Reader Response Logs" were done rarely, 2.21 (figure 6). "Dialog Journals" were also done rarely 2.50 (figure 7) and "journal writing" was done weekly 3.14 (figure 8). "Anthology-based literature" was done weekly, almost often at 3.93 (figure 9). The use of "writing

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folders/ process writing "was done rarely, almost weekly in some cases at 2.93 (figure 10). The inclusion of "Oral and visual activities" were done often at 4.0. (figure 11) Here, I did not make clear that I meant oral and visual activities generated by the students , and guided by the teachers. However, I found it encouraging that oral and visual activities are considered important. The average answer to "grammar and composition skills taught separately from literature" was high at 3.23, or weekly. (figure 12) "Study and skill sheets used for instruction" rated a 2.86 rarely to almost weekly. (figure 13) "Skills-taught according to scope and sequence" rated a 2.93 again, rarely to almost weekly.(figure 14) "Reading strategies taught and used" rated rarely or 2.93, again almost weekly.(figure 15) Finally, when asked if "cooperative learning groups are used" the average was an encouraging 3.38 or weekly.

I believe that the response from my sample of 14 language arts teachers showed a traditional bias with a desire to try new methods and approaches. The background of my respondents is important in understanding the survey. 77% of the respondents had received their undergraduate degrees before or during the 1970's. Only 2 or 14% had received their undergraduate degree during the 1980's. Out of 14 respondents, 10 had achieved master's degrees and here the time period is a bit more varied, but not

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much: 35% received their master's degree before or during the 1970's, 28% in the 1980's and one or 7% in the 1990's.

When asked to answer "What was the philosophy of your English methods classes? 42% answered "Traditional", 50% answered "Combination traditional and whole language", and 1 or 7% answered "whole language"

In response to "How many years of teaching experience do you have?" the answers were 20+ 42%, 16-20 years, 21%, 11-15 years, 7%, 6-10 years, 21 %, and 1-5 years, 14%. The respondents indicated the following percentages for "How many hours of whole language training have you experienced? 0 hours, 35%, 1-10 hours, 50%, 10-30 hours, 7%. I feel that they may have experienced this training in their English methods classes, or at conferences, or school in-services.

When asked "How familiar are you with the whole language concept?" 79% answered "somewhat", 7% answered "very", and 14% answered "unfamiliar" I found these answers to be contradictory in regards to the previous question. If 57% indicated that they had anywhere from 1 to 30 hours of training in whole language, it seems that they should have been more familiar with the concept or philosophy

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When asked , "How would you describe the language arts instruction in your classroom, either whole language approach or traditional", 50% indicated "whole language"; 7% said it is used 75% of the time, 14% indicated 25% of the time, and 14% said it is not used at all

In describing traditional Language Arts instruction in the classroom, 29% indicated it is used 75% of the time, 57% said it is used 50% of the time, and 7% indicated it is used 100% of the time, and 7% said it is used 25% of the time.

When asked if given a choice and resources which language arts approach they would prefer, an overwhelming majority--86% indicated they would prefer a combination traditional/whole language approach Only 14% indicated a preference for traditional approach and none expressed a preference for an exclusive whole language approach

If I were to attempt to draw a profile of a Cass County Language Arts teacher it would be thus: the teacher has approximately 20 years teaching experience, has both an undergraduate and graduate degree, has had one or more hours of training in whole language and "somewhat" understands the concept of whole language instruction. This teacher uses the traditional approach, basically; but uses other whole language

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strategies as well in his/her classroom. This teacher teaches 9 -12 grades and would prefer a combination of traditional and whole language approach in the classroom.

Discussion

I found that my hypothesis was correct in that whole language is indeed seeping into secondary school classrooms; but, basically, the traditional approach to language arts instruction is the basic and most used approach in the classrooms. I was encouraged that a majority of the teachers preferred a combination traditional/whole language approach.

One limitation of this study is that while it did include all of the language arts teachers in Cass County High Schools, it was only 14 teachers--certainly not a very large sample. It is significant, I believe, that Constance Weaver at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan, is an ardent advocate of whole language and encourages workshops and seminars in it. This October at WMU's Engfest--a state-wide language arts workshop, I will be presenting a workshop entitled "Using Whole Language and Theatre to Teach Shakespeare (and Others)" I also felt that some of the strategies were unfamiliar to the teachers, and they either didn't respond to that strategy (see Spread Sheet) or answered it incorrectly.

Some comments were in regards to the survey, such as "I've circled several 2's, but I don't think "rarely" is as accurate a term for my responses as "sometimes". These activities either occur bi-weekly or in units lasting six weeks or so" Another comment was "I believe as more people (students and teachers) are exposed to whole language, the easier it will be to integrate into the overall curriculum Right now, it's hard to teach a combination, but harder on the students to adjust when some teach 100% traditional and others 100% whole language."

Another teacher said, "I do feel that basic skills are necessary; however, the method of instruction should be anything but basic. Kids seem to respond much better to the whole language approach"

Conclusion

I feel that these comments express the results of my survey well. Teachers in the Cass County, Michigan, high schools are attempting to integrate whole language into a traditional framework. They seem open to new ideas and strategies, but unfamiliar with strategies such as reading techniques, dialog journals, reader response journals, student selection of reading, book sharing, and letting the learner chose his/her response to literature.

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Since traditional language arts instruction goes from the part to the whole, and whole language goes from the whole to the part it seems incongruous that the two could exist effectively side by side. I do feel that the holistic approach is the approach best established by research in how students learn. We hear of holistic medicine and of treating the whole person, not just a part of the person I feel that it is the future in restructuring the language arts curriculum in our schools. I feel that there is much confusion in the field of teaching in regards to whole language, and a real hesitancy to throw out or discard traditional, or what has been the accepted method of teaching language arts for the last 40 - 50 years. Yet, there seems to be an awareness that the present (traditional) method is not producing readers , writers, speakers, and listeners. There is a willingness to learn new methods. However, one must remember Furnace Woods, and realize that education in whole language must be community-wide. It must include administrators, school board members, teachers, para-professionals, parents, and students. New methods of assessment and evaluation must be considered and communication is the key element in any effective and lasting change.

Hopefully, if whole language is implemented in the elementary school, the education and breadth of it will inevitably include the

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middle school and high school. Perhaps, more intense university/high school curriculum projects in whole language is in order; and, it is beneficial to the business community (i.e. Eli Lily) to become involved in providing grants and funds in order that these projects may succeed.

Modern research has indicated that there is a better way to teach reading, writing, listening, and speaking--whole language, let us hope that in the future, it will become the approach to language arts instruction in the United States.

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APPENDICES

Ada M. Barr
70945 Ridgewood Road
Edwardsburg, Michigan 49112
October 20, 1993

Dear Colleague;

I am in the process of researching Whole Language Approach to the teaching of Language Arts. This research is to fulfill the requirement for Ed 591 (Exit Research Project) at IUSB.

As you are aware, the Whole Language Approach is presently being taught in many elementary and middle schools. It seems to me, as professionals we must be in sync in our instruction in secondary schools. I believe that many precepts of Whole Language are being taught in secondary schools. As Shakespeare said, "A rose by any other name would still be a rose". I also believe that many secondary teachers embrace the Whole Language philosophy of integrated studies. With this survey I am hoping to assess the language arts strategies and practices being used by language arts teachers in the secondary schools of Cass County, Michigan: Cassopolis, Dowagiac, Edwardsburg, and Marcellus.

This survey is being sent to ninth through twelfth grade teachers. The results will provide new insights into the current status of language arts instruction in Cass County, and hopefully, provide a basis for future goal-setting and curriculum planning.

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey then return it to me in the attached stamped envelope. Your response will be anonymous.

Thank you very much for taking the time to help me in this research.

Sincerely,

Ada

Ada M. Barr

P.S. I would appreciate it very much if you could return this survey to me by November 1.

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LANGUAGE ARTS STRATEGIES SURVEY

How often are the following practices used in your classrooms? Please circle the appropriate response.

	Daily	Often	Weekly	Rarely	Never
1. Teacher reads aloud	5	4	3	2	1
2. Sustained Silent Reading	5	4	3	2	1
3. Book Sharing	5	4	3	2	1
4. Student selection of Reading	5	4	3	2	1
5. Students chose their response to literature	5	4	3	2	1
6. Reader response logs	5	4	3	2	1
7. Dialouge journals	5	4	3	2	1
8. Journal writing	5	4	3	2	1
9. Anthology-based literature	5	4	3	2	1
10. Writing folders/Process Writing	5	4	3	2	1
11. Oral and Visual Activities included with literature	5	4	3	2	1
12. Grammar and composition skills taught separately from literature	5	4	3	2	1
13 Study Sheets or Skill Sheets	5	4	3	2	1
14 Skill lessons taught according to scope and sequence	5	4	3	2	1
15 Reading strategies (ex. REAP, EERQ, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1
16 Cooperative Learning groups	5	4	3	2	1

Comments: _____

Please check the appropriate response on the line:

1. When did you graduate from college?

	Before 1970	1970's	1980's	1990's	N/A
Undergraduate					
Graduate					

2. What was the philosophy of your English-methods classes?

Traditional	Whole Language	Combination: Whole language/ Traditional

3. How many years of teaching experience do you have?

1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20+

4. How many hours of Whole Language training have you experienced?

0 hours	1-10 hours	10-30 hours	More than 30 hours

5. How familiar are you with the whole Language Concept?

Very	Somewhat	Unfamiliar

6. How would you describe the Language Arts instruction in your classroom?

	100%	75%	50%	25%	0%
Whole Language Approach					
Traditional					

7. If given a choice and resources what language arts approach would you prefer to use in your classroom?

Traditional (anthology and skills)	Whole Language	Combination: Traditional/Whole Language

8. Grade level: (circle) as many as apply 9, 10, 11, 12

Comments: _____

BACKGROUND														
Graduated (U)	<1970	1970	<1970	<1970	1970	1980	1970	1970	1980	<1970		1970	<1970	1970
Graduated(G)	1970	1980		1970	1980		1970		1990	<1970	1980	1980	<1970	
Philosophy	T	C	T	C	C	C	T	T	C	T	C	T	C	W
Yrs.Experience	20+	16-20	20+	20+	'11-15	'1-5	16-20	20+	'6-10	'20+	'1-5	'6-10	'20+	'16-20
Hrs.W.L. training	0	'1-10	0	'1-10	'1-10	'1-10	0	0	'1-10	0	'10-30	'1-10		'1-10
W.L. concept	S	V	S	S	S	S	U	U	S	S	S	S	S	S
L.A. Intruct.WL	25	50	75	50	50	50	0	50	50	0	50	0	100	25
L.A. Instruct.Trad	75	50	25	50	50	50	75	50	50	50	50	75	100	75
T. WL or Comb.	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	T	C	T
Grade 9		X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X			
Grade 10	X	X			X		X		X	X		X		
Grade 11	X	X	X	X			X	X			X		X	X
Grade 12	X	X	X	X								X	X	
SURVEY questions														
Teacher reads aloud	3	4	3	5	4	4	4	4	3	4	5	2	5	5
Sustained silent reading	3	4	4	5	3	2	5	3	4	4	4	3	4	3
Book sharing	2	2	4	2	2	2	2	2	4	2		2	3	2
Student selection of reading	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	4	2	3	2	2	2
Chose response to lit.	3	4	3	5	4	4	4	1	4		3	2	4	3
Reader response logs	2	2	4	1	2	2	2	1	4	4	2	2	2	1
Dialog journals	2	2	3	1	4	1	2	1	5	4	5	2	2	1
Journal writing	2	4	3	1	5	3	2	1	5	4	5	4	3	2
Anthology-based lit.	4	4	3	5	4	2	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Writing folders/process	3	4	2	2	4	2	5	4	3	2	3	3	3	1
Oral & visual activities	4	4	2	5	4	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	3	4
Grammar & comp. separate	4		2	2	4	2	3	4	2	4	4	4	4	3
Study/skill sheets	4	2	2	2	3	2	3	4	3	4	3	3	2	3
Skills-scope & sequence	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	4	2	3	4	4	4	2
Reading strategies		4	2	5	4	1	3	2	4	4	2	4	3	3
Coop. learning groups	2	4	3	4	4	2	4		4	4	3	4	3	3

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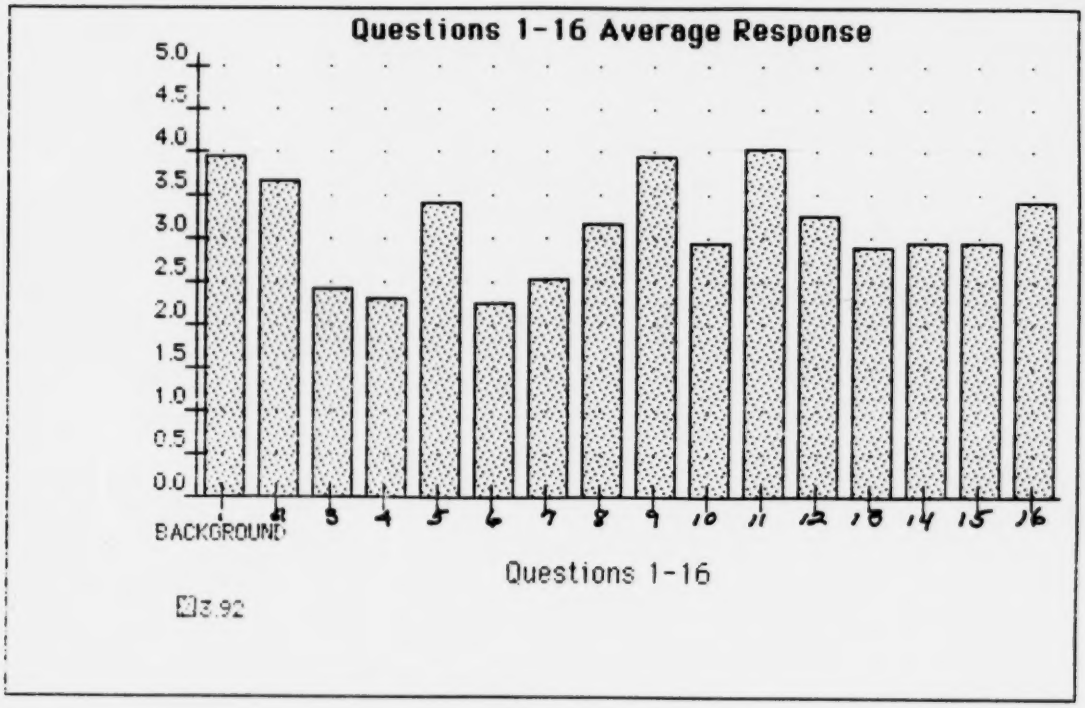
Questions 1-16 Average Response
5.0
4.5
4.0
3.5
3.0
2.5
2.0
1.5
1.0
0.5
0.0
BACKGROUND
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
Questions 1-16
3.92

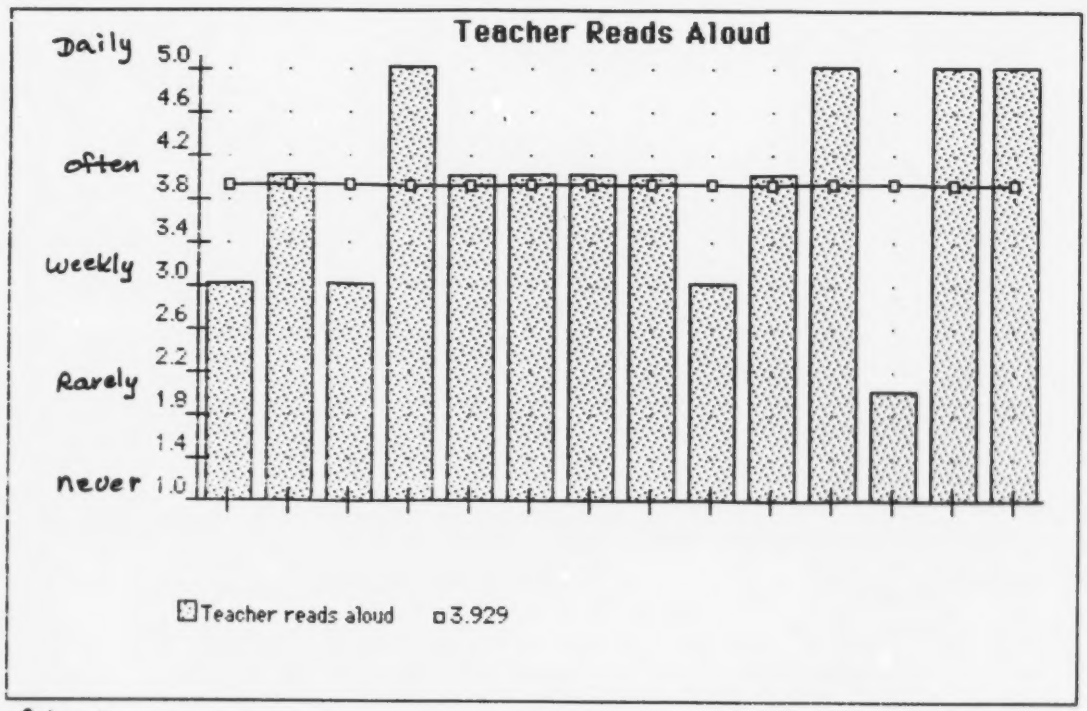
Teacher Reads Aloud
Daily
often
weekly
Rarely
never
5.0
4.6
4.2
3.8
3.4
3.0
2.6
2.2
1.8
1.4
1.0
Teacher reads aloud
3.929

fig. 1

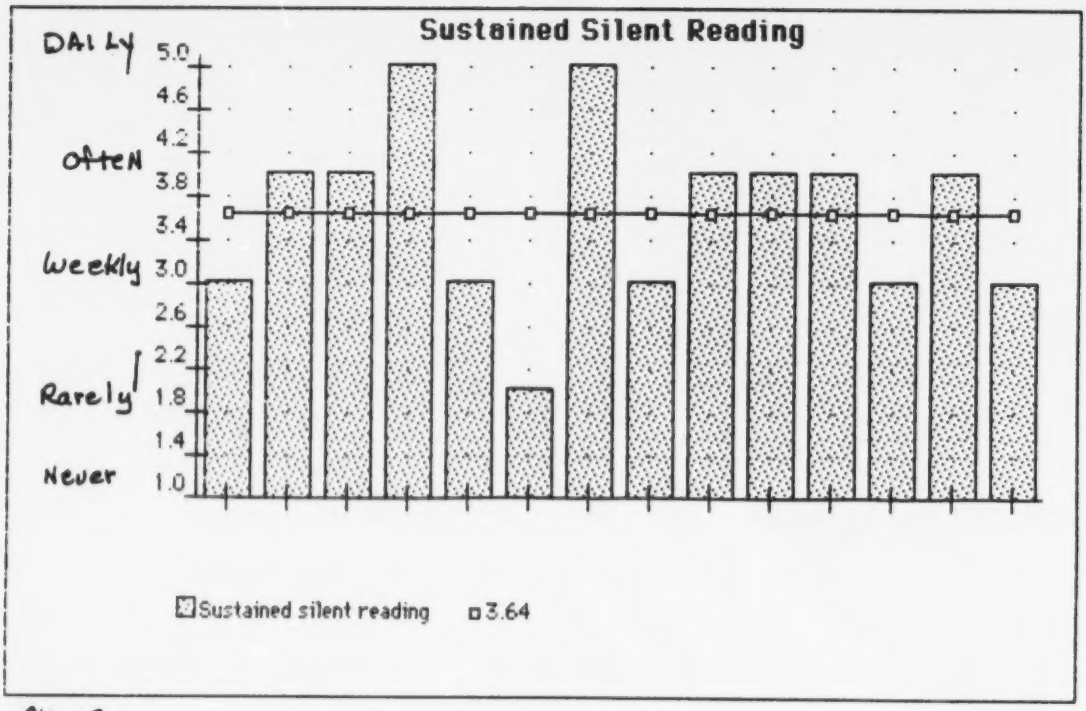
Sustained Silent Reading
DAILY
5.0
4.6
4.2
OftEN
3.8
3.4
Weekly
3.0
2.6
2.2
Rarely
1.8
1.4
Never
1.0
Sustained silent reading
3.64

Fig. 2

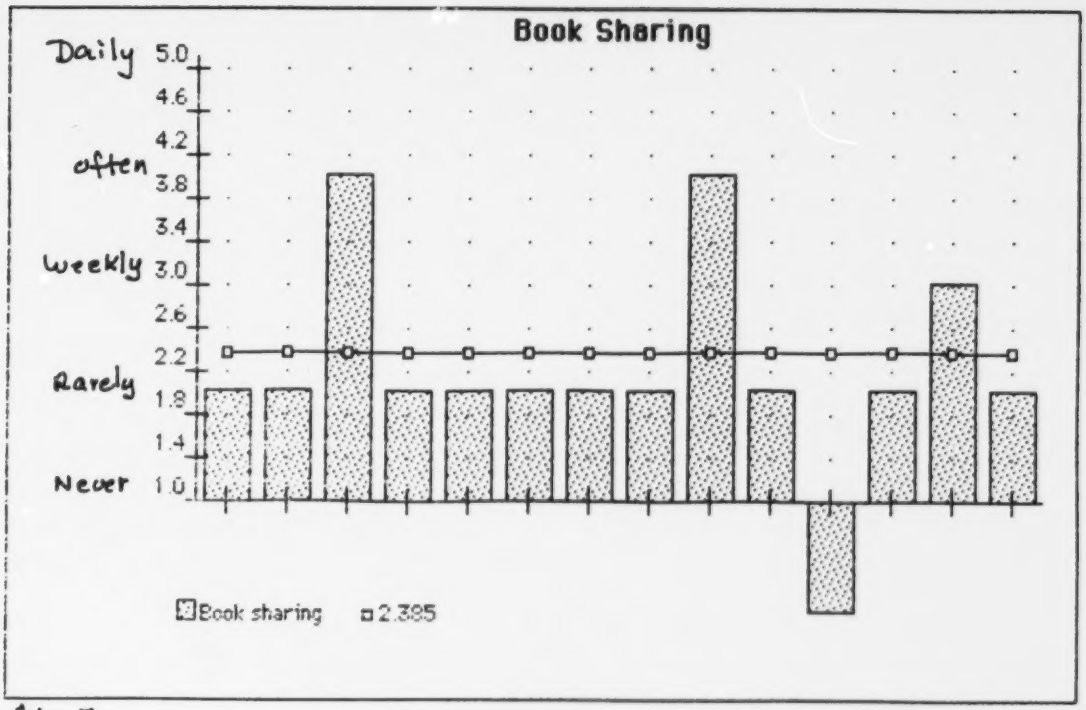
Book Sharing
Daily
often
Weekly
Rarely
Never
5.0
4.6
4.2
3.8
3.4
3.0
2.6
2.2
1.8
1.4
1.0
Book sharing
2.385

Fig. 3

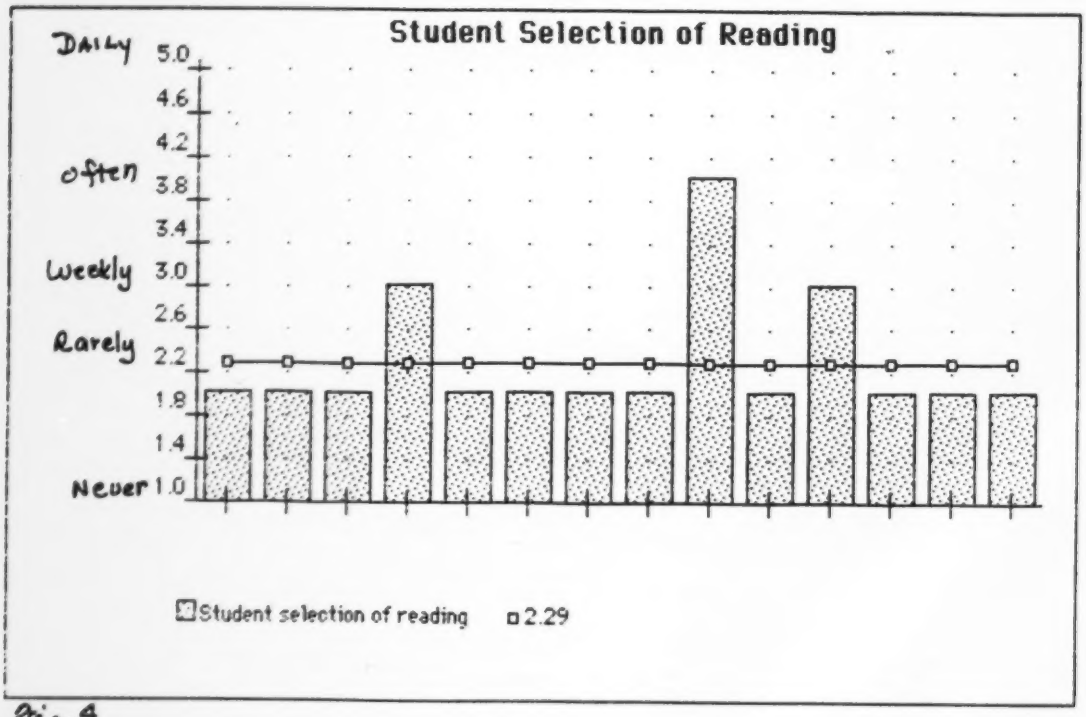
Student Selection of Reading
Daily
often
Weekly
Rarely
Never
5.0
4.6
4.2
3.8
3.4
3.0
2.6
2.2
1.8
1.4
1.0
Student selection of reading
2.29

Fig. 4

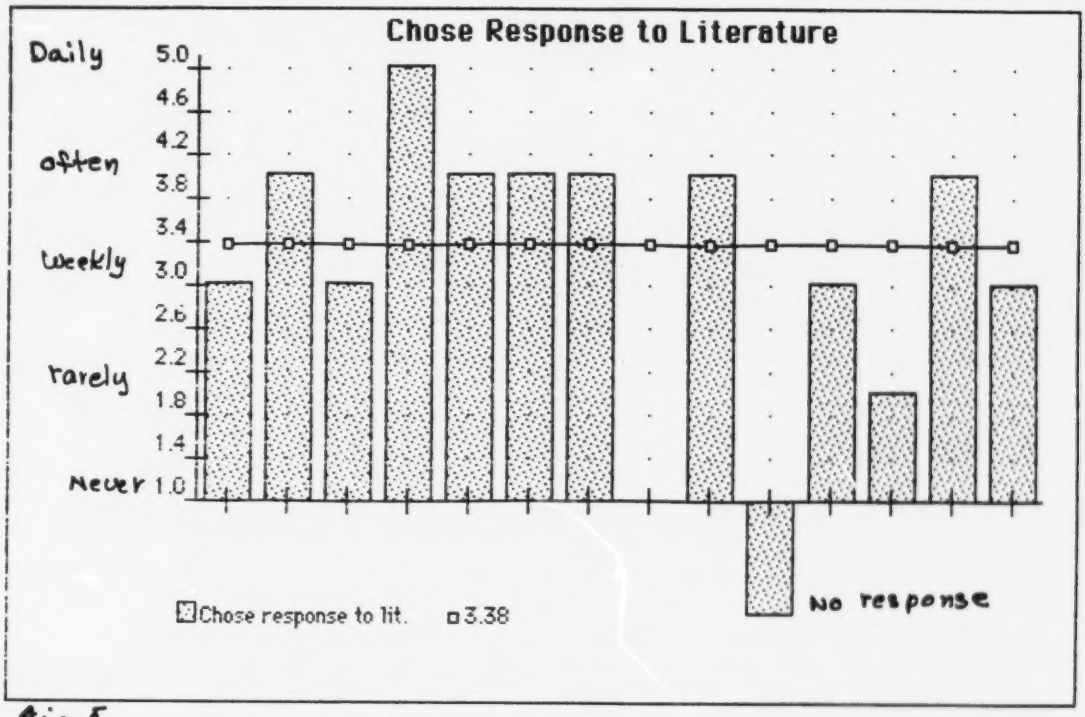
Chose Response to Literature
Daily
often
weekly
rarely
never
5.0
4.6
4.2
3.8
3.4
3.0
2.6
2.2
1.8
1.4
1.0
Chose response to lit.
3.38
No response

Fig. 5

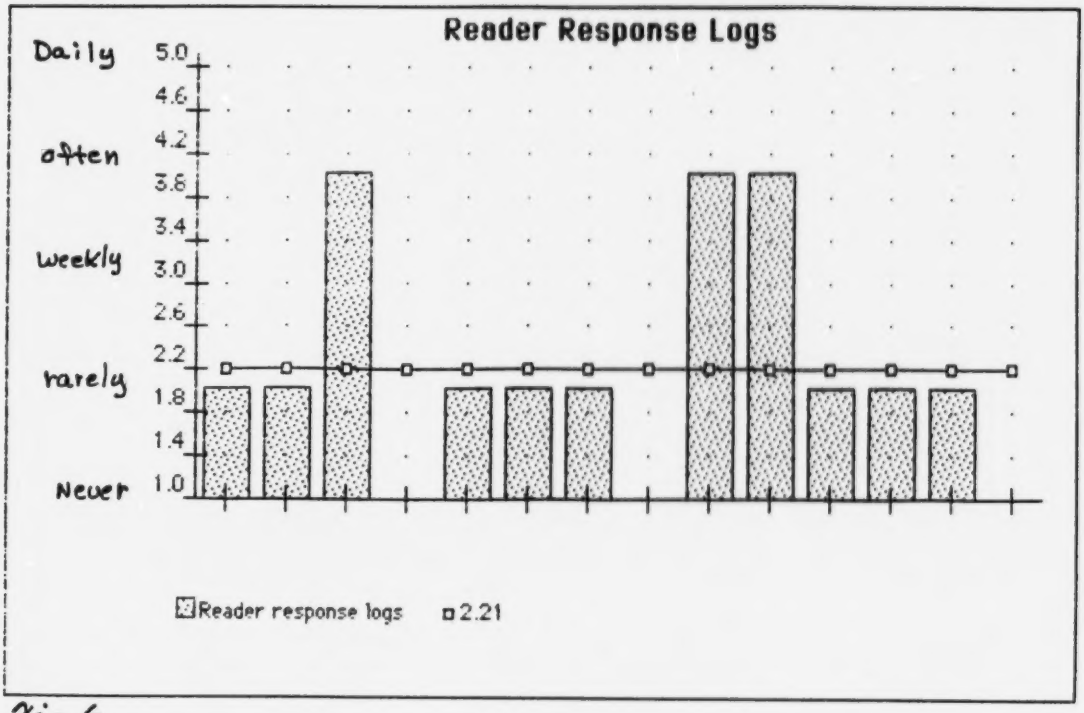
Reader Response Logs
Daily
often
weekly
rarely
Never
5.0
4.6
4.2
3.8
3.4
3.0
2.6
2.2
1.8
1.4
1.0
Reader response logs
2.21

Fig. 6

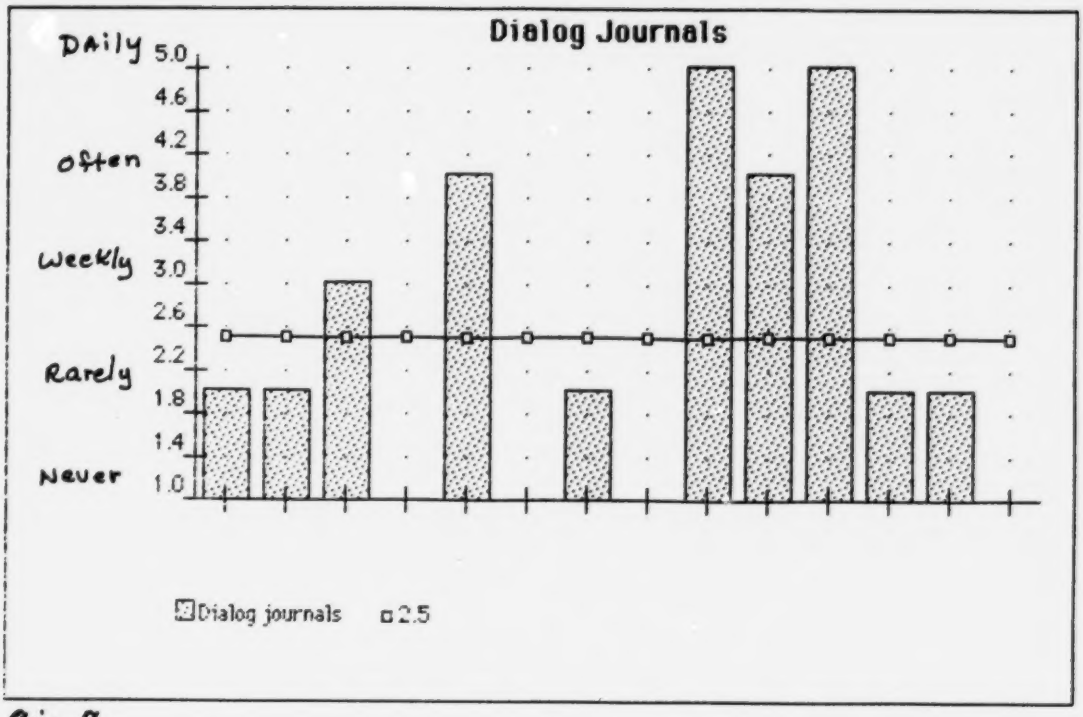
Dialog Journals
Daily
Often
Weekly
Rarely
Never
5.0
4.6
4.2
3.8
3.4
3.0
2.6
2.2
1.8
1.4
1.0
Dialog journals
2.5

Fig. 7

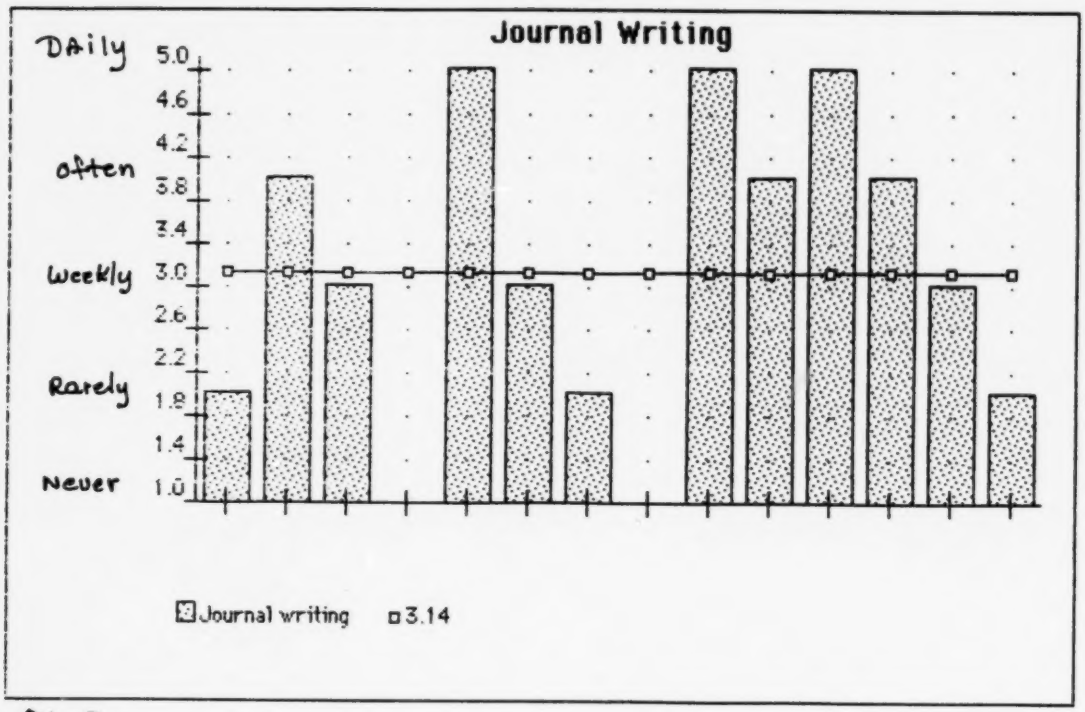
Journal Writing
DAily
often
Weekly
Rarely
Never
5.0
4.6
4.2
3.8
3.4
3.0
2.6
2.2
1.8
1.4
1.0
Journal writing
3.14

Fig. 8

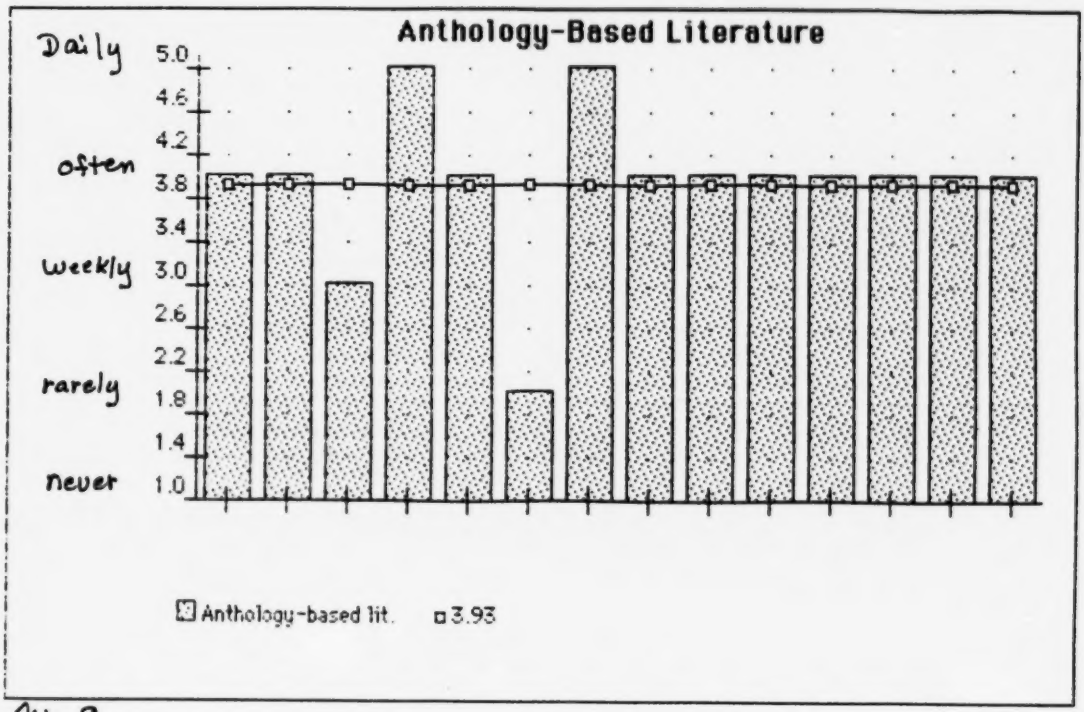
Anthology-Based Literature
Daily
often
weekly
rarely
never
5.0
4.6
4.2
3.8
3.4
3.0
2.6
2.2
1.8
1.4
1.0
Anthology-based lit.
3.93

Fig. 9

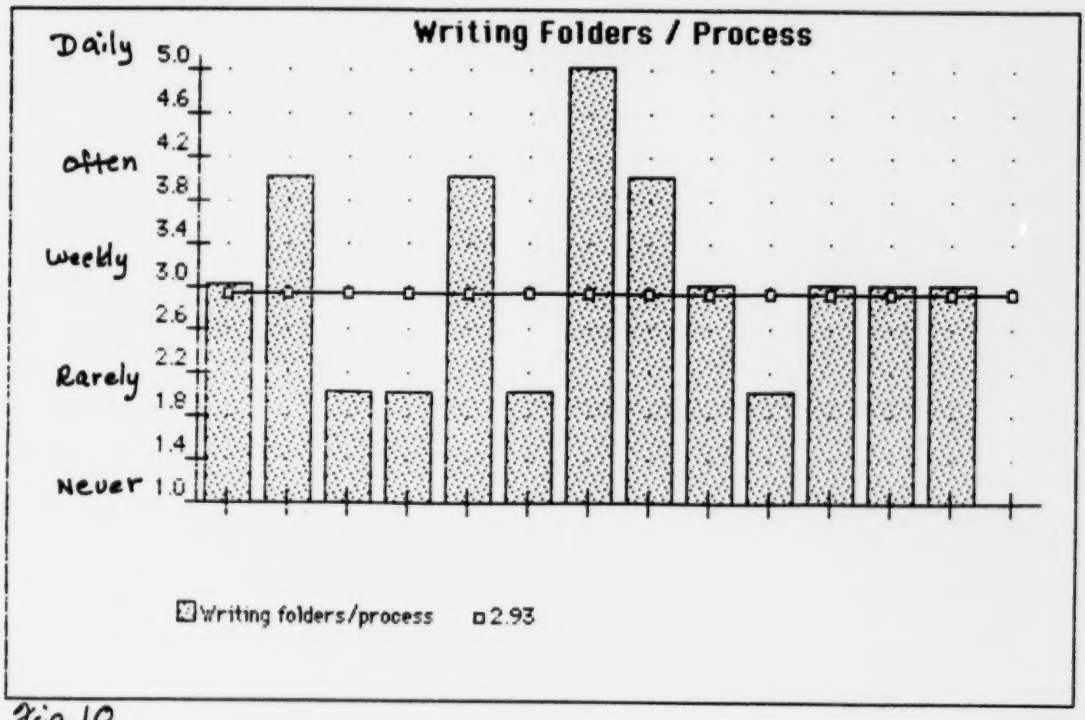
Writing Folders / Process
Daily
often
Weekly
Rarely
Never
5.0
4.6
4.2
3.8
3.4
3.0
2.6
2.2
1.8
1.4
1.0
Writing folders/process
2.93

Fig. 10

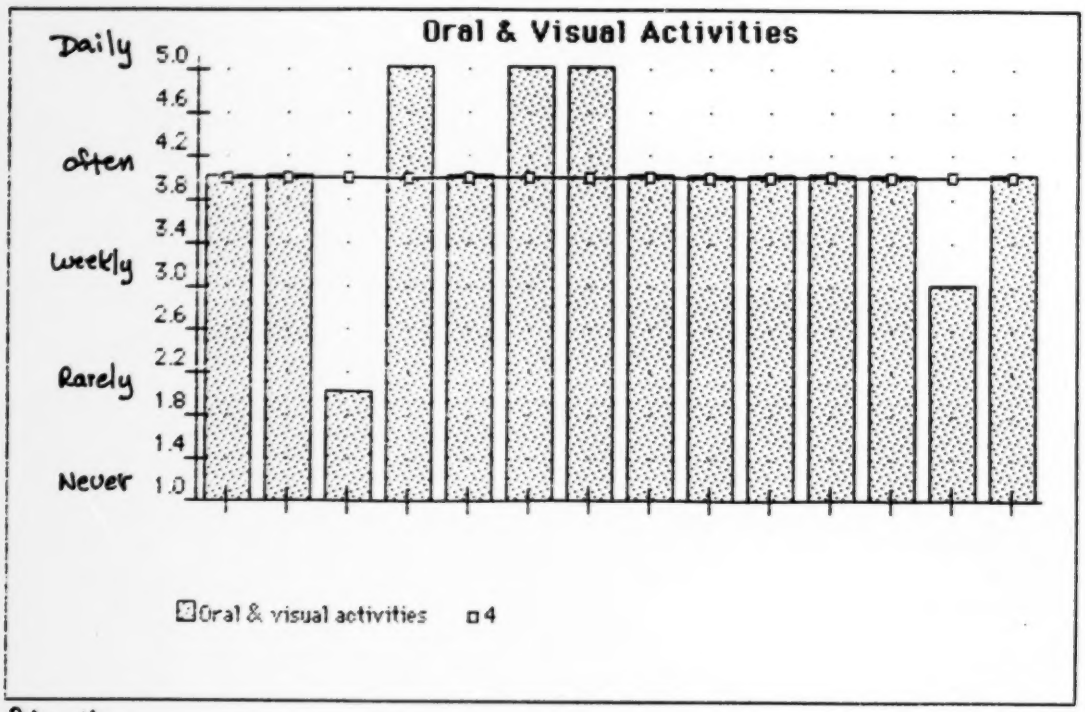
Oral & Visual Activities
Daily
often
Weekly
Rarely
Never
5.0
4.6
4.2
3.8
3.4
3.0
2.6
2.2
1.8
1.4
1.0
Oral & visual activities
4

Fig. 11

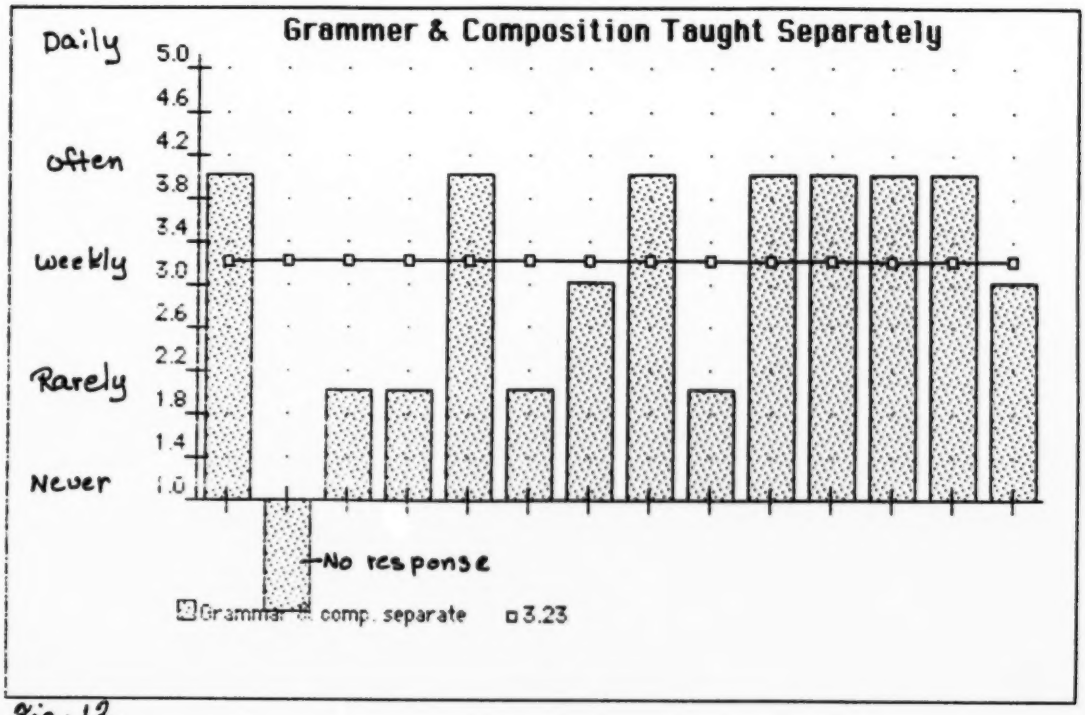
Grammer & Composition Taught Separately
Daily
often
weekly
Rarely
Never
5.0
4.6
4.2
3.8
3.4
3.0
2.6
2.2
1.8
1.4
1.0
No response
Grammar
comp. separate
3.23

fig. 12

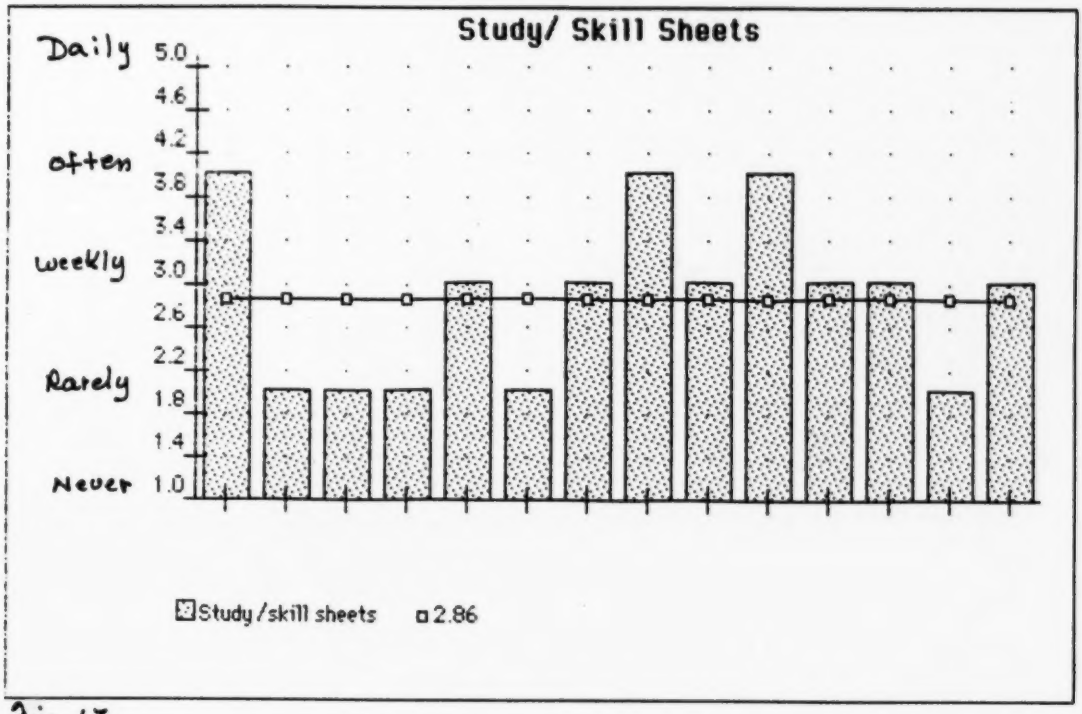
Study/ Skill Sheets
Daily
often
weekly
Rarely
Never
5.0
4.6
4.2
3.8
3.4
3.0
2.6
2.2
1.8
1.4
1.0
Study/skill sheets
2.86

fig. 13

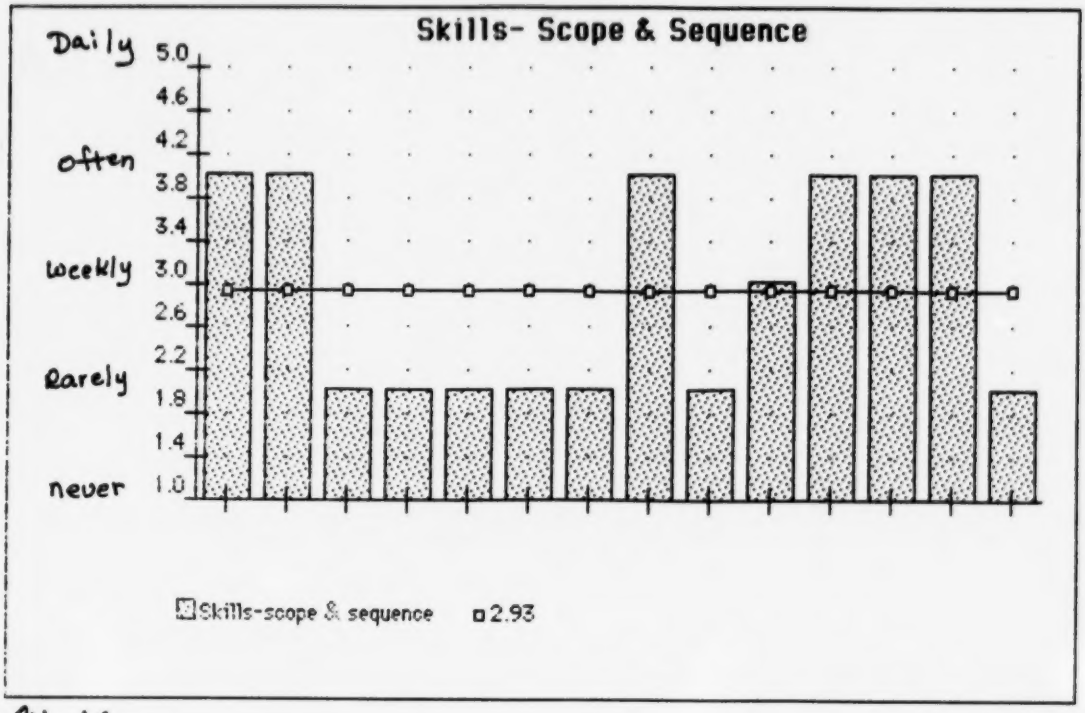
Skills- Scope & Sequence
Daily
often
weekly
Rarely
never
5.0
4.6
4.2
3.8
3.4
3.0
2.6
2.2
1.8
1.4
1.0
Skills-scope & sequence
2.93

Fig. 14

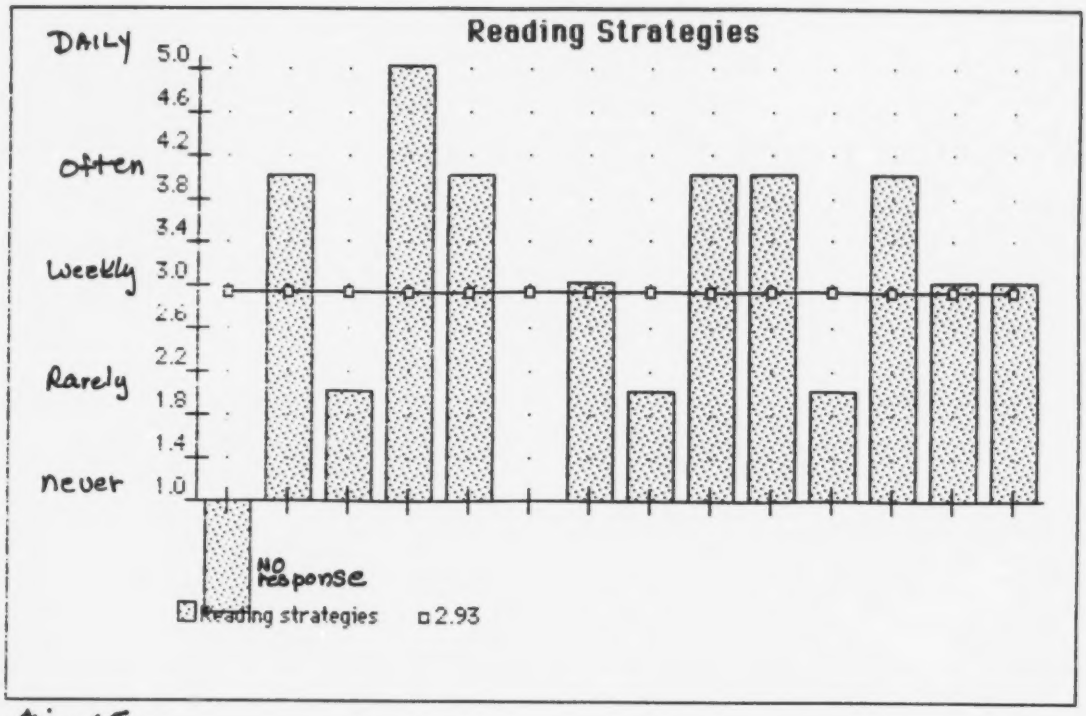
Reading Strategies
DAILY
5.0
4.6
4.2
often
3.8
3.4
weekly
3.0
2.6
2.2
Rarely
1.8
1.4
never
1.0
NO response
Reading strategies
2.93

fig. 15

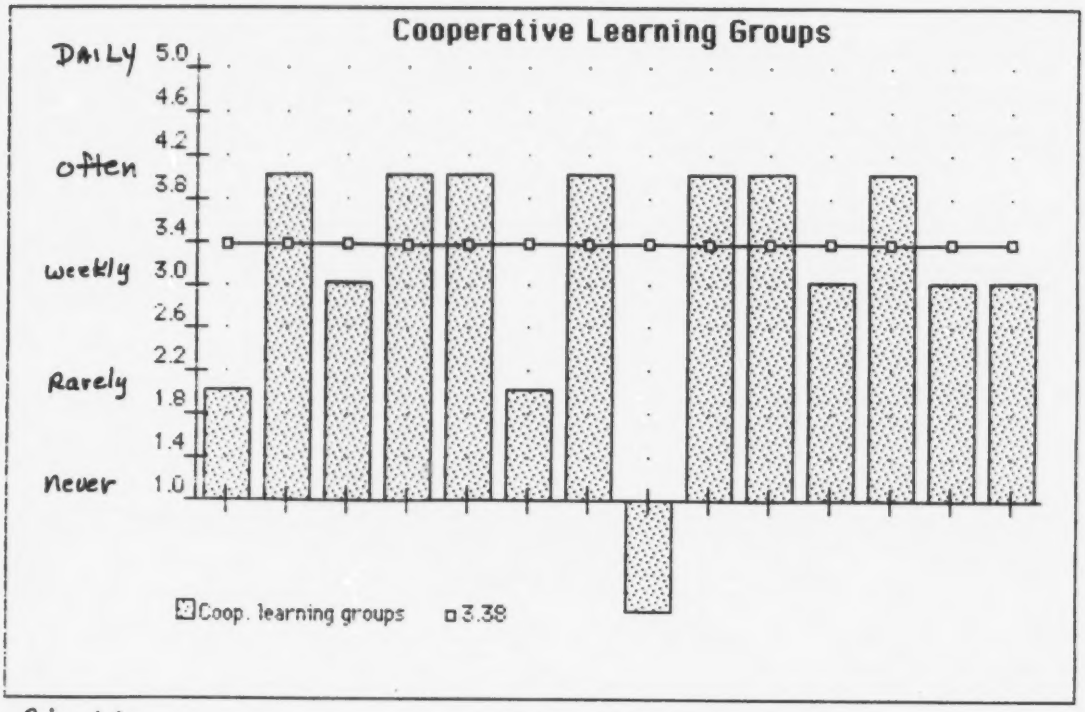
Cooperative Learning Groups
DAILY
often
weekly
Rarely
Never
5.0
4.6
4.2
3.8
3.4
3.0
2.6
2.2
1.8
1.4
1.0
Coop. learning groups
3.38

fig. 16

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(616) 663-2636

Teaching Experience:

1976-Present — Cassopolis Ross Beatty High School
Cassopolis, Michigan 49032
Assignment: English and Theatre

1970-1975 — Cassopolis Brookside Middle School
Assignment: English, Social Studies, Reading

Education:

1966 - 1968 Southwestern Michigan College, Dowagiac, Michigan
Associates in Arts Degree

1968 - 1970 Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
Bachelor of Arts - English & Social Studies

1988- Indiana University & Michigan Dept. of Education - certified to teach Theatre.

1989 - Present, Indiana University at South Bend, Indiana, Working on a Master of Science degree in Secondary Education.